DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 021 CE 028 982

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TITLE Adult Education in Togo.
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PUB DATE [81]
NOTE 12p.: Paper presented at the School of Technical Careers' Faculty Forum (Carbondale, IL, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education: *Adult Education: *Cultural Background: Cultural Education: Developing Nations: Economic Development: *Educational Development: Educational History: *Educational Needs: *Educational Policy: Job Training: *Literacy Education: Needs: Postsecondary Education: Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Togo

ABSTRACT

Like that of other African nations, the educational system of Togo was created during the country's colonial period, and reflected the needs of the colonizers, not those of the native peoples. Education was elitist and served to further the government bureaucracy. After Togo became independent in 1960, it began to revise its inherited French educational system to better serve its needs. Educational reforms emphasize free and compulsory school attendance, preschooling and continuing education, equal educational opportunities for girs and boys, and a curriculum developed from local needs. A special effort has been made to adapt the educational curricula and teaching methods to Togo's economic and social needs. This effort includes the teaching of national languages to preserve and at the same time improve the culture. Togo's efforts in adult education are directed to the adult population living in rural areas who have not received formal schooling. Because of financial considerations, however, this effort is very limited. Efforts include improving agricultural skills, health education, disease eradication, and literacy education. In addition, two training centers are maintained to train workers in various occupations, such as secretarial work, technical drawing, auto mechanics, and heavy equipment operation. One of the most important adult education areas is culture and recreation. The development of Togo's culture and heritage is a means for arousing national consciousness and for directing attention to solving needs and problems. Effective educational programs for the adult population are critical needs in the economic and social growth of Togo. (KC)

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# ADULT EDUCATION IN TOGO

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ADULT EDUCATION IN TOGO

In most West African countries, the present educational tradition is a consequence of their colonial experience and indigenous values. This process accounts for the present pluralism of culture, race, language, religion, and social structure. Colonization resulted in French, English, German, and other European nationals settling in West Africa. Accordingly, these influences were affected and imprinted by the diffusion of Western culture, beginning in the 17th Century and reaching a peak in the 19th Century with the emergence of industrialization in Europe.

In colonial Africa, administrators relegated education, at first, to missionary efforts and philanthropic organizations. In time, however, colonial governments became more directly involved in the shaping of education policies and programs. The results of these efforts were characterized by the following:

1. During the early years of colonization, governments limited themselves to supporting private education through token subsidies with only a gradual development of a public educational system reflected through the establishment of government schools. Private education continued to be encouraged by government and in most West African countries accounted for a major proportion of the total educational effort.
2. The European traditions of elite education were naturally adopted by colonial leadership. The acceptance of mass education values received support only to the extent that students were needed for government post-primary and secondary education schools.

3. The emphasis on the employment of the local population in lower level government positions greatly influenced and shaped educational policy and programs. In West Africa colonial territories, minor government positions were staffed by the native population and the educational system was a means to provide them with the educational credentials for such civil service roles. Education emphasized traditional literary academic subjects with little emphasis on practical or applied learning.
4. The educational system and curriculum were predominantly urban centered and remained urban oriented even after educational facilities were built in remote rural areas.
5. West African countries imported the examination system for grade promotion from the European educational experience. The examinations were actually written, printed, and administered by the colonial power. These examinations dominated the curriculum and teaching techniques used in the schools and colleges. The "teacher dependent" educational system reflected an attitude toward learning which emphasized "examinable" content as perceived by non-African countries rather than content deemed important by the needs of the country.
6. In almost all West African countries, a foreign language was adopted as a medium of instruction. As a result, the educational system became even more isolated from its environment and from the needs of secular rural society, increasing further rigid formal institutionalization. At independence the legacy of the colonial experience to the educational developments in West African countries have emphasized:

1. a strong private sector involvement in education
2. a low level of adult literacy
3. inequitable distribution of educational facilities between urban and rural areas
4. an almost total absence of technological education related to indigenous needs.

After independence, almost all West African governments initiated educational reforms. The prevailing high rate of illiteracy and the severely limited school facilities were primary needs. Measures for educational reconstruction took different forms in different countries but they all had centralized ministries of education.

The Republic of Togo

The Republic of Togo is a small coastal country of West Africa. It occupies a land area of 22,000 square miles with a population of 2,000,000. French is the medium of instruction used by the government and by the 2130 elementary and secondary schools enrolling over 875,000 students.

At the time of independence in April 2, 1960, Togo inherited the French educational system which was unsuited to its economic and social needs. Revisions of the educational system were needed to provide an education that would enhance national development efforts which was based upon an agrarien economy. Educational reform emphasize free and compulsory school attendance, pre-schooling and continuing education, equal educational opportunities for girls and boys and a curricula developed from local needs. Means for achieving reform focuse on:

1. the professional training of an adequate number of teachers

2. the publishing of a sufficient number of text books which are appropriate to the goals of the new curriculum
3. the involvement of parents in the educational process
4. the use of the local community as a learning environment
5. the integration of native languages and cultural values into the school curriculum
6. the emphasis on health through the curriculum and free medical examinations
7. the use of experienced learning techniques
8. the establishment of a National Institute of Linguistics for the development of native languages.

A special effort is made to adapt the educational curricula and teaching methods to Togo's economic and social needs. This also includes the teaching of national languages to preserve and at the same time improve those cultural elements of Togo. It is the means by which youth are oriented toward the social, cultural, artistic, political and economic life of society and to participate fully in the development of it. Language is recognized as one of the strongest cultural forces for national unity.

Colonial schools were ill-adapted to the developmental needs of Togo. Their aims and goals were based on the values and needs of the colonizing country and not on national needs for economic and social improvement. As stated in the text for outlining Togo's educational reform.

> "Our schools also produce uprooted and alienated citizens. They turn their backs on our cultural, philosophical, artistic, and technological values. There is, of course, no question of reviving

or encouraging out-of-date customs. For instance, those who hold the formulae of our rich pharmacopoeia must not be allowed to hide them under a deadening veil. On the other hand, the spirit of fraternity which characterizes the African civilization must be maintained at the expense of the cold relations between wealthy employers and exploited workers. It is therefore absolutely necessary to subject all our cultural values to rigorous critical analysis and extract and rehabilitate those which are compatible with the demands of modern scientific, technological, economic and social advancement.

Moreover, through its pattern of selection at every level of schooling, the present education system encourages elitism and develops an ever-increasing individualism. This produces, in the social behaviour of the educated, particularly among key personnel, a spirit of unscrupulous competitiveness accepting blindly all that comes from the western world. Schools thus contribute to the fragmentation of our traditionally communal societies.

At the critical stages in their school careers the pupils must be guided, according to their individual abilities and interests, towards careers which feature in the development plans. Selection for the different careers must be made solely according to the objective criteria of vocational aptitude.

In order that the schools should not continue to ignore our specifically African culture, it is absolutely imperative to rehabilitate our languages and cultural values which are not obstacles to socio-economic development. All the positive philosophical values must find expression in the schools as well as all typically Togolese and African forms of expression: oral, plastic, musical, technological, etc.

The rehabilitation of our cultural values and our languages will prevent phenomena of alienation and rootlessness, while at the same time enabling each citizen to gain a better knowledge of the problems of the Togolese society and form an opinion as to how they should be solved.

It must encourage the development of the critical faculties, which are the basis of all modern cultures, and so lead to a critical appraisal of all conventions and traditions, while at the same time preserving those values which are not psychological or sociological brakes on development but can be incorporated in a national consensus, African and universal in character."[1]

A primary concern of the Togolese educational system was the high dropout rate of students from primary and secondary schools. A major cause was the formalistic nature of the French educational system.

The Togolese educational reform system was comprised of four levels. The first educational level consisted of kindergarten and primary school.

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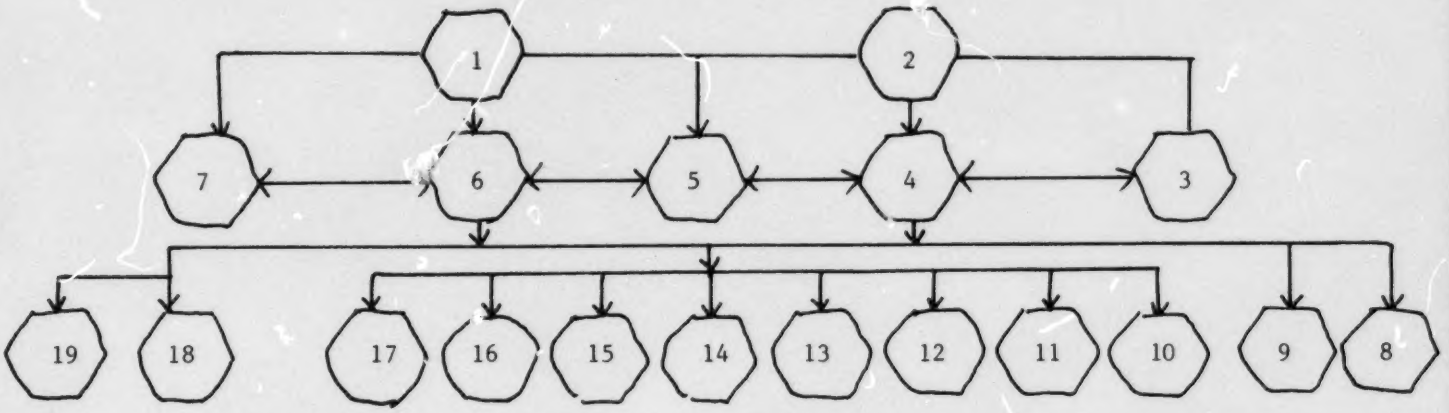
[1]La Reforme de L' Enseignement au Togo, Editogo, Lome, 1975.

The second level was the junior high school. The third level included three years known as senior high school. The fourth and final level comprised of higher education.

The organizational structure of Togo's reformed educational system is diagramed as follows:

Reformed Educational System of Togo




1. Minister of High Schools and Higher Education
2. Minister of Elementary and Junior High Schools
3. General Secretary
4. Director of Cabinet
5. Higher Council on Education
6. Directors of Cabinet
7. General Secretary
8. Director of Elementary Education
9. Director of Junior High Schools
10. Director of School Guidance and Career Orientation
11. Director of National Library
12. Director of Educational Planning
13. Director of Continuing Education
14. Director of Personnel and Budget
15. Director of UNESCO's Local Bureau
16. Director of Scholarship and Training
17. Director of ETS and Examination
18. Director of Senior High Schools
19. Director of Higher Education

The Minister of High Schools and Higher Education works closely with the Directors of Senior High Schools and Higher Education. The Minister of Elementary and Junior High Schools works primarily with the Directors of Elementary and Junior High Schools. Both Ministers serve

on the Higher Council on Education composed of the ministers, their cabinets, and representatives from elementary, secondary and college teachers, secondary school principals, superintendents of elementary and secondary schools, the Rector of the University as well as selected community leaders. The Higher Council on Education does not meet on a regular basis, but is convened to discuss major educational issues and to make recommendations.

Togo's out-of-school educational programs is directed to the adult population especially those adults living in rural areas and who have not received formal schooling. Because Togo's financial and educational resources are extremely limited, any massive expansion of educational opportunities for adults is limited.

A central issue facing the government is how best to manage educational resources in order to help adults improve their social and economic status. Improving agricultural methods, public health systems, and rural development in general are all major national priorities which are dependent upon some form of adult education. In the broadest sense, out-of-school education aims to further Togo's national priorities by contributing to the development of individuals and to the promotion of social welfare.

Togo's adult education programs are conducted in conjuction with such ministeries as agricultural, health, rural development, and local government. The Ministry of Agriculture uses extension programs to enhance farm production through the use of new methods and equipment, seeds, and fertilizers. Likewise, the Ministry of Health provides information on child and family health care and nutrition. National programs and campaigns against such diseases as smallpox and meseals are also conducted.

Togo's work and production based training is another form of out-of-school education. The Ministry of Labor and Manpower operates two permanent training centers. These are training centers for occupational education in the industrial and public sectors. The National Center for Professional Improvement (CNPP) conducts retraining programs and workshops for secretaries, clerks, and bookkeepers. Courses also include auto mechanics, electricity, mechanical drawing and industrial drafting. Specific training programs vary in time according to trainee needs, and ability. Programs and courses use both classroom and laboratory learning which encompass both theory and application.

The Regional Training Center for Road Maintenance (CERFER) which accepts trainees from such neighboring countries as Niger, Ghana and Upper Volta as well as trainees from Togo. The Center provides advanced training in working with heavy civil engineering machines in road maintenance and public safety. Programs and courses include a variety of equipment maintenance procedures and construction techniques.

The Ministry of Women Advancement and Social Affairs provides extensive literacy training programs. The programs are intended to familiarize people with local development projects, to provide an access to further training, and to facilitate more effective participation in Togo's social and economic development. The Ministry operates adult literacy centers in urban and rural areas. In addition to these programs, the centers provide training programs to farmers and their families which aim at developing a more active role in the directing their own social and economic well-being.

The effectiveness of the literacy programs depends on the willingness of the people to participate. An assessment of local needs as well as the level of cooperation by community leaders is one of the first steps undertaken to determine program feasibility. Based upon the assessment results, a local literacy committee is appointed to provide support and direction to the literacy center. Instructors are appointed who are responsible for designing specific instructional programs. The learning activities of the center include discussions of specific problems of importance to participants. The solutions resulting from the discussions are implemented with the help of those governmental agencies with responsibilities for those identified activities. For example, a discussion on fertilizers is followed by a field training program conducted by an agricultural expert. Similarly, a discussion concerning the importance of good drinking water is the link to training programs conducted by a health care officer who explains the proper construction of a water filter made from local materials.

A post literacy program is also provided as a follow up to maintain newly acquired reading skills. The overall objective is to apply skills to solve problems and create a bitter environment for continued involvement in learning. One means for achieving this is the use of newspapers and in specific a rural news oriented newspaper. The adult literacy service published the first issue of the rural newspaper in a native language in 1972. A second newspaper was printed in Kabye language in 1977. These two newspapers gave adults an opportunity to read and develop their reading skills. In addition to

improving reading skills, the newspapers provided useful information concerning forming techniques, health care, and social events.

One of the most important adult education areas is culture and recreation. The development of Togo's culture and heritage is a means for arousing national consciousness and for directing attention to solving needs and problems. Native language is an essential factor in cultural development. Not only is it a vital medium of communication but also is the means by which natural culture is developed and expressed. Closely connected with cultural development is the role of mass media particularly radio and television. Also, libraries and museums are a key factor in Togo's overall efforts to develop its own cultural entity.

The education of adults is one of the most urgent needs in Togo today. Economic and social growth are closely related to the quality of Togo's system for educating and training human resources. Effective educational programs for the adult population are critical to increasing the standard living. To promote economic growth, it is essential to have an educated labor force equipped to handle the problems of a dynamic society.